

Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Team
April 21, 2016 Meeting Summary

Decisions and Actions from Meeting

Decision
1. Accepted the March 15, 2016 meeting summary as final with edits.
2. Preliminarily agreed to use “primary”, “contributing”, and “stabilizing” definitions for populations when developing recovery goals.
3. Preliminarily agreed to include policy makers in the delineation of primary, contributing, and stabilizing populations after the co-managers initially categorize.

Action	Assignment
1. Update the Salmon Recovery Council about the process to engage co-managers on developing steelhead recovery goals.	Scott Powell, Jeanette Dorner, & Elizabeth Babcock
2. Discuss the support needed for watersheds to develop local chapters.	Scott Powell, Susan O’Neil, Tom Ostrom, Alan Chapman, Elizabeth Babcock, & Jeanette Dorner
3. Provide the previous funding request(s) from PSP to the Governor’s Office for local support to watersheds.	Jeanette Dorner & Tristan Peter-Contesse
4. Hold May 23 and June 23 as potential field trip days.	Recovery Team members

Welcome, Introductions, & Old Business – Bob Wheeler, facilitator for the Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Team (“Team”), welcomed participants and led introductions (*see end for a list of participants*). There were no changes to the draft agenda.

Announcements

- Elizabeth Babcock will keep the Team informed about the course the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will take in responding to the lawsuit jointly filed by the Wild Fish Conservancy, Wild Steelhead Coalition, Wild Salmon Rivers, International Federation of Fly Fishers, and the Washington Fly Fishing Club.
- Elizabeth Babcock has been able to secure some capacity within NMFS to help with the Team’s work on integrating marine survival research into the steelhead recovery plan.

March 15, 2016 Draft Meeting Summary – There was one edit suggested from a Team member that all members agreed to. Additionally, three clarifications were made related to content in the summary:

- When the meeting summaries refer to preliminary agreements, that means the Team has come to a certain agreement which will be used in drafting the recovery plan, but will be revisited when the full recovery plan has been written and is ready for approval.
- While NMFS sets the de-listing criteria, the recovery goals are set by the Recovery Team.
- The Cascade Mountains criterion for developing recovery goals includes the Olympic Mountains as well (the criterion relates more to elevation and gradient than geography).

Recovery Goals – Prior to this meeting, Elizabeth Babcock and Joe Anderson had discussed the approach for developing recovery goals and agreed to a sequential approach. To determine recovery goals, a small group will start by hosting co-manager meetings in each Major Population Group (MPG), to share information from the life cycle model. In May and June, they will work with the Puyallup and White

watersheds, then Nisqually, then Cedar River/Lake Washington, then south Sound, then east Kitsap. Nisqually has already developed their steelhead recovery plan so that meeting will focus on comparing their plan with the outputs from the life cycle model. From July through September, they will work with Skokomish, Hood Canal, and Dungeness/Elwha. In the final phase, they will work with the North Cascades between October and January 2017. Elizabeth noted that this is a packed schedule, but they hope that this will help create robust recovery goals. Discussion about this included:

- The Recovery Team should consider how to address the development of recovery goals if a local group believes that a Demographically Independent Population (DIP) is extinct. This could also include the issue of whether steelhead were ever in a particular geography, and whether or not it would count as “extinct”.
 - A Team member recalled that the recovery team for Puget Sound Chinook dealt with a similar issue. Their way of addressing the issue was to use the Endangered Species Act (ESA) assumption that it does not require recovery of extinct populations.
 - Another way to address this is to categorize populations into high, medium, or low viability.
 - A Team member noted that education and outreach will be critical to keep partners updated about how the recovery plan is progressing and how recovery goals relate to information in other reports.
 - The Team looked at the definitions from the Lower Columbia Salmon & Steelhead Recovery Plan, where they categorized the populations into primary, stabilizing, and contributing. This could be used for the steelhead recovery plan.
- The life cycle modelers have discussed how to capture recovery goals by referring to the viability curves on an abundance-productivity chart. They noted it will likely be important to have ranges for the recovery goals, and it will be important to capture the co-managers’ input on the ranges.
 - The life cycle modelers are also looking at how to incorporate the quasi-extinction threshold (QET), which helps the model understand how to make populations go extinct if small basin size and low abundance persist.
- Another topic to discuss with the co-managers is what to do with the populations without a lot of baseline or historical data. The modelers could use surrogate data, but it would be helpful to have input from the co-managers.

Preliminary Decisions: The Team preliminarily agreed to use the primary, stabilizing, and contributing categories to define populations that will help in setting recovery goals. They could use similar definitions as in the Lower Columbia Salmon & Steelhead Recovery Plan, or define them differently. The Team also preliminarily agreed to use the technical information to develop draft categories of primary, stabilizing, and contributing populations, and then to incorporate policy makers in the discussion once there is a draft to react to.

Support to Watersheds – The Team next discussed how to best support the watershed groups as they develop their local steelhead recovery chapters. Discussion included:

- After the meetings with the co-managers this year through January 2017, the hope is to have the abundance and productivity goals set for each population. Then they could host another round of watershed meetings (maybe not in all watersheds, but some geographic range) which could invite a broader set of interests beyond the co-managers. This would help ensure the recovery goals are strongly drafted but also well vetted. The co-managers might also help with a communication strategy to share the draft recovery goals with a wider audience.
- The Team noted the upcoming challenge of securing financial capacity to support the watershed groups to do the work needed for drafting local steelhead recovery chapters. The hope would be to secure funding so that every watershed group gets financial support.

- A Team member noted that it could be interesting to set the primary, stabilizing, and contributing categories and then to see what the watershed groups think about their local population(s) and how that fits into that categorization.
 - Using the life cycle model, the Team could categorize primary, stabilizing, and contributing populations using similar definitions as in the Lower Columbia recovery plan.
 - It was also noted that at some later point, involving local policy makers to understand and confirm the primary, stabilizing, and contributing populations' categorization will be important. Ken Currens can demonstrate ideas of how to do this at a future Team meeting.
- Scott Powell, Jeanette Dorner, and Elizabeth Babcock agreed to update the Salmon Recovery Council about the general plan for developing steelhead recovery goals.

Feedback to the Puget Sound Partnership – Jeanette Dorner from the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) asked for feedback from the Team about the specifics for a funding request to the legislature for financial support to the watersheds. PSP does not fully know the possibilities until they begin working with the Governor's Office, but hope to secure as much funding as possible to support the watersheds. Discussion included:

- PSP volunteered to share previous years' funding request(s) from PSP to the Governor's Office for this same purpose. In the past, PSP's request was generic and the challenge in the next round is that the need is great to support all watersheds.
- The Team suggested including more specific information in this round, and explaining the scientific basis for primary, stabilizing, and contributing populations and the importance of getting to recovery for all or some of those.
- Susan O'Neil, Tristan Peter-Contesse, Elizabeth Babcock, Scott Powell, Alan Chapman, and Tom Ostrom agreed to work in between Recovery Team meetings with Jeanette to think more specifically about what this funding request could be.

Draft Recovery Plan – The Team considered having a workshop in summer 2016 to start drafting strategies and actions, that then can later be refined with the results of the life cycle model and the abundance and productivity recovery goals developed by the co-managers. The Team agreed to have a 2-day retreat soon, to do a focused meeting one day and a field tour the second day.

- The Team agreed to brainstorm strategies and actions, organized around the listing factors. This could be for each population or as an MPG or DPS at the bigger scale. A Team member suggested that this would fit nicely with the Open Standards perspective, and might be smart to start at the DPS level.
- The Team also considered separating the recovery plan into a general plan that could come out first, and then an implementation plan that could come out later, giving more time for the watersheds to develop their chapters.
- A member also encouraged the Team to consider the content of the Chinook recovery plan and the ongoing update process.
- A member noted that the Team may need more experts than the membership currently has to fully develop the recovery actions and strategies for all topics. The Team still agreed to begin the brainstorm soon.
- The Team also identified the technical documents used as the basis for developing the Recovery Plan.

Planning Geographies – Amilee Wilson and Tristan Peter-Contesse are still working with the few watersheds where the steelhead and Chinook geography is not obviously overlapping. They are establishing contact with the lead entities, and then will reach out to the co-managers.

Critical Habitat Designation – Steve Stone will be available to answer critical habitat questions at the May 24 Recovery Team meeting instead.

Pressure Assessment – Susan O’Neil, Ed Connor, Tristan Peter-Contesse, and Ken Currens are working on a pressure assessment instead of a linkage library as a resource for recovery planning. PSP developed a Puget Sound-wide pressures assessment in 2014, which includes many habitats and species that can help identify the pressures specific to steelhead. This workgroup hopes to make more progress on the pressures assessment specific to steelhead before the next Team meeting, and then demonstrate it as a tool for the Team. Even though the endpoints do not specifically include steelhead, several components incorporate the needs for steelhead. The only small gaps are hatcheries and harvest specific to steelhead, which could be incorporated later.

Workgroup Progress Reports – The Habitat Protection Workgroup will meet next on May 17 and will work with Abby Hook to see how they can incorporate data or organizing information from the Snohomish Basin Protection Plan.

Next Steps – The Team considered when to do the 2-day field tour. They considered several locations including the Nooksack, Skagit, and Hood Canal. For now, they will hold May 23 and June 23 in addition to the previously-scheduled May 24 and June 24 meeting dates, and will determine the dates soon so everyone can keep their calendars up to date.

The May 24 meeting will include discussions on:

- Primary, stabilizing, and contributing definitions for populations;
- Support to the watersheds;
- Questions on the Critical Habitat designation;
- Review the new Recovery Plan outline; and
- Pressure assessment.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Participants:

Name	Affiliation
Elizabeth Babcock	NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
Alan Chapman (phone)	Lummi Nation
Ed Connor	Seattle City Light
Ned Currence	Nooksack Indian Tribe
Ken Currens	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Jeanette Dorner	Puget Sound Partnership
Jeff Hard	Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Thom Johnson	Point No Point Treaty Council
Susan O'Neil	Long Live the Kings
Tom Ostrom	Suquamish Tribe
Tristan Peter-Contesse	Puget Sound Partnership
Scott Powell	Seattle City Light
David Price (phone)	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Amilee Wilson	NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Services
Bob Wheeler	Triangle Associates
Claire Chase	Triangle Associates